

# Home is where the art is

## Local builder adds an artistic touch to shingle work

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Sam Kalil is bringing an artistic touch to home building.



In the business for many years, Kalil, the owner of Fine Home Renovation, has only

recently begun blending his lifelong love of art with the business of shingling homes.

Years ago, in Scituate Kalil saw a Canada

Goose design in the shingles on the side of a house. He wanted to try the technique himself.

He eventually built a Bluefish pattern into the side of his home along the Bluefish River in Duxbury. Later, while working on another home, the homeowner asked him to place a striped bass design in the shingles.

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Web site: [www.samkalil.com](http://www.samkalil.com)

"We worked on it for two weeks and it came out pretty well," he said.

Kalil said he more or less taught himself how to make the designs. "There's no resources you can really use," he said.

Overlapping the shingles can create the outlines of the drawing. Some designs stop there, but others use different colored or textured shingles. Kalil said for one design of a mermaid, he used scalloped shingles to simulate fish scales.

"I look at something and say, how do I transform this and use the medium," he said.

From an early age, Kalil said he's had an interest in



Kalil used layered shingles to create images of two whales on a home on King Caesar Road.

art. He won several contests while a student in his native Connecticut.

In college at Central Connecticut State University, Kalil majored in industrial arts, and harbored thoughts of becoming a teacher. After college, he went into the Peace Corps, and realized teaching wasn't in his future.

After returning home, Kalil started working on his sister's home in Hingham.

"One thing led to another, and now it's 30 years later," he said.

He put aside thoughts of pursuing his artistic dreams for a more stable career in home building.

"My uncle told me not to go into art because I'd be a starving artist," he said.

Much of his work focuses on finishing work, like interiors and building bookcases.

However, all through his construction career, he never gave up his love of art, constantly working on projects and "do-dads" around the house.

"I can't buy a car or a truck without embellishing it," he said with a laugh.

Although he enjoys building homes, he admits that there aren't a lot of opportunities to show creativity.

"For an artist, you can be sort of stifled," he said.

Kalil said he'd like to retire from the home construction business and focus on the shingle art. Since those first designs, he's created mermaids, whales, and currently he's working on two sharks for a home on Martha's Vineyard.

"Everyone that sees it says, I've never seen this before, I didn't know it was possible," he said.

Now, Kalil thinks back to that uncle and has a different word of advice for anyone interested in pursuing a career in art.

"You should go for it. You've got to go with what your talents are," he said.

Anthony Edwards will be highlighting Sam Kalil on Chronicle on Channel Five next week.